



# Greater Horn of Africa Peace Building Project

## The Effectiveness of Civil Society Initiatives in Controlling Violent Conflicts and Building Peace:

A Study of Three Approaches in the Greater Horn of Africa

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The following Executive Summary is excerpted from the larger report “The Effectiveness of Civil Society Initiatives in Controlling Violent Conflicts and Building Peace: A Study of Three Approaches in the Greater Horn of Africa” which contains a full synthesis report, the case studies and methodology on which the findings are based, and survey on Internet Usage as a peace-building tool. This Executive Summary and the full report are both products completed for USAID/REDSO under the DG/Conflict Evaluation and Analysis Task Order, managed by Ned Greeley and Eric Richardson with Lee Foley.

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The full report can be found at: [http://www.usaid.gov/regions/afr/conflictweb/pbp\\_report.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/regions/afr/conflictweb/pbp_report.pdf) or write to [peacebuilding@yahoo.com](mailto:peacebuilding@yahoo.com) for an electronic version.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report synthesizes the findings and results of a project that examined the impacts of three generic approaches that are being taken by NGOs in the Greater Horn of Africa region toward conflict prevention, management and peace building. The project sought to find out what has been effective, and then draw lessons about why, so that effective practices might be identified for possible application in other situations.

## A. Rationale and Content of the Study

### A.1. Regional and Policy Context

The countries of the Greater Horn of Africa (GHA) region have experienced an unusual number of intra-state or interstate conflicts<sup>1</sup> in recent decades. Each of these conflicts has taken a huge toll in terms of human lives lost, the suffering of refugees and internally displaced people, and the destruction of the social fabric, physical infrastructure, and natural resources. Especially as the end of the Cold War removed any strategic value that some of these conflicts may have held, the seemingly endemic nature of violent conflict in the region has led USAID and many other international development agencies to take a different approach to addressing conflict in the region. They have concluded that, unless the problem of conflict is addressed more deliberately and adequately, other than through providing humanitarian relief, these countries will not be able to develop economically or achieve full democracy, and the donors' development efforts will be continually subject to degradation or destruction. USAID's Greater Horn of Africa Initiative illustrates this new impetus by encouraging the development of early warning systems; outlining conceptual, analytical and policy tools for responding to conflict situations; and authorizing activities aimed at regulating violent conflicts in the region.

Consequently, since the mid-1990's, relief organizations and other NGOs, bilateral and multilateral donors, international financial institutions, and governments in the region have devoted increasing energy and resources to understanding the kinds of conflict affecting the region. They have launched a number of projects specifically aimed at resolving existing conflicts as well as preventing them from arising in the first place. Both on the local and national level, they are carrying out activities that seek to contain violence and encourage peace in active war zones, to rebuild societies recently ravaged by wars, and to respond to the early signs of conflict to keep them from breaking out. Interest is also being shown in how existing development programs may sometimes actually be contributing to conflict and how they can be more explicitly enlisted to manage and prevent it.

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<sup>1</sup> The program terminology used by REDSO/ESA is conflict prevention, mitigation and response (CPMR). For analytical purposes and to avoid confusion, this report will refer to the more conventionally used terms of conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution and peace building.

Depending on sponsors' interests and capacities, recent conflict initiatives have used a considerable variety of approaches to try to influence conflict and build capacities for peace. These include conflict resolution training, local reconciliation projects, projects centered on women as peacemakers, natural resource management, and many others. With these countries, there have been created a number of new indigenous NGOs that receive assistance to implement conflict resolution and peace building programs. As a large number of projects have been implemented, a literature has mushroomed in the field of international conflict resolution and peace building. In numerous conferences, seminars and workshops the various approaches have been touted and discussed as possible ways to achieve some progress in reversing the trend toward conflict in the Greater Horn region.

Despite this new flurry of activity, conflict remains a serious problem in the region. Several longstanding destructive conflicts, such as those in southern Sudan and Burundi, have waged on and on; new conflicts have erupted, such as the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia; and other potential conflicts threaten to erupt, such as in Kenya and possibly Tanzania. Understandably, the increased international involvement in addressing conflicts juxtaposed with the tendency of conflicts to appear unaffected by these efforts has increasingly raised an important question: What kinds of approaches are actually effective in conflict prevention, conflict management or peace building?

Where significant results have occurred, sponsors have been eager to learn how they might be expanded or applied in other places. Other than statements of intention or anecdotal evidence of effects here and there, however, there has been little knowledge about the actual effects of these initiatives on the forces driving conflicts or on societies' ability to resist conflict. Data specifically on this question generally have not been systematically collected.

## **A.2. Aims of the Study**

In this context, the Regional Economic Development Services Organization of Eastern and Southern Africa in USAID (REDSO/ESA) commissioned a study—the Peace Building Project for the Greater Horn of Africa—to examine the impacts of several types of existing activities in conflict prevention, management and peace building in the GHA region. Its purpose was also to draw lessons about what has been effective and why, so that the most beneficial practices might be identified for possible application in other situations. Based on settings that were found to be most conducive to such results, the study was to identify areas where promising opportunities and useful entry points might exist for introducing new initiatives. Finally, the findings were to be disseminated to USAID's NGO partners and other actors who can make the best use of them.

In particular, the study was to focus on four “priority areas” or “focal points” where specific kinds of activities, or initiatives, have been supported by USAID and other agencies. The four areas are as follows:

- ❑ Local Peace Processes that make use of traditional methods and institutions of dispute resolution,
- ❑ “Middle Level” Dialogues focused on national conflicts and contentious political and policy issues,

- ❑ Peace Radio, and
- ❑ Use of the Internet as a peace building tool.<sup>2</sup>

These different generic approaches to conflict were deemed to be of special interest in part because it was hypothesized that they had certain characteristics that might enable them to achieve especially good results. These characteristics included their being able to engender trust by being led by respected religious leaders, their drawing on the legitimacy of traditional elders, and their involvement of women, whose interests often cut across conflict lines. REDSO/ESA was also interested in analyzing the participation in peace processes from different segments of the community (elders, women, youth, civil servants, educators) in working with existing and new institutions (such as Peace Radio) for new purposes. These cross-cutting factors appear throughout the general lessons learned and in the citations of effective practices found in the full synthesis report.

REDSO/ESA contracted Management Systems International, Inc. (MSI) to establish the Peace Building Project for the Greater Horn of Africa and to formulate and apply a methodology for conducting the appropriate evaluations and analyzing the collected data.

### **A.3. Approach of the Study**

This report presents the most important findings and policy implications that emerged from the project. In order to address REDSO's concerns, the project had to undertake four principal tasks and resolve certain corresponding methodological issues. These tasks and issues were as follows:

- ❑ Identify suitable concrete examples of initiatives in the priority areas of interest that could actually be studied. What are suitable and viable illustrations of the generic approaches about which useful data can be collected?
- ❑ Define criteria by which to judge the effectiveness of initiatives, specifically in terms of their achievement of conflict prevention, management and peace building objectives. What do we mean by "effectiveness" when it comes to preventing or managing conflicts and building peace?<sup>3</sup>
- ❑ Organize and carry out a process for collecting the appropriate data. How do we gather reliable information and data?
- ❑ Analyze the data in order to present findings and derive policy implications. How do we identify useful lessons to improve the initiatives and guide their application in new situations?

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<sup>2</sup> This topic was subsequently defined as a survey of existing uses, not an evaluation of the technology on conflict.

<sup>3</sup> The program terminology used by REDSO/ESA is conflict prevention, mitigation and response (CPMR). For analytical purposes and to avoid confusion, this report will refer to the more conventionally used terms of conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict resolution and peace building.

The ways in which MSI handled these tasks are described briefly below:

Case studies: The MSI team identified examples of initiatives that both reflected the features of the types of approaches that were of interest and had operated in the GHA region long enough to have produced some results (at least one year). These selections were also widely presumed to be doing a good job in addressing conflicts. The cases that were selected for study and whose results are presented in this report are as follows:<sup>4</sup>

Local Peace Processes Drawing on Traditional Methods of Dispute Resolution:

- ❑ Wajir Peace and Development Committee, Northern Kenya,
- ❑ Inter-tribal Peace Conferences in Southern Sudan, New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC), and
- ❑ The Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI) in Northern Uganda.

"Middle Level" Non-Official National Policy/Political Dialogues:

- ❑ Faith-based Facilitation of the Constitutional Review, National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCCK),
- ❑ The Apostles for Peace (CAP) Project in Political Dialogue, Burundi, International Alert, and
- ❑ The War Torn Societies Project, Somaliland

Peace Radio:

- ❑ Studio Ijambo, Burundi, Search for Common Ground, and
- ❑ HornAfrik, Somalia

Criteria for Defining Effectiveness: To find out what was effective, the project first had to define the impacts that given initiatives would be observed to have if they were judged to be contributing significantly to reducing conflict or supporting peace building. Unlike existing program evaluations in the development field, this project specifically examined impacts of initiatives on *conflict and its peaceful management*. Conflict is a societal process that *can* be constructive if managed in non-violent ways, but that too often in this region has been violent and destructive, if not devastating. This required looking at an initiative's performance through a relatively novel lens of conflict and peace impact criteria.

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<sup>4</sup> For details on the selection criteria and projects, see Appendix A.

The indicators of impact used in the project were derived from the various causes of violent conflicts and the societal or institutional capacities that help manage conflicts without violence. That is, an initiative may be deemed effective to the extent that one can demonstrate that it has had some significant influence on the *sources* of a conflict—i.e., the main dimensions or forces that dispose societies and communities toward it and that provoke or perpetuate violent conflicts—or has strengthened a process or condition that has been shown to *prevent or contain* such conflicts.<sup>5</sup>

Initiatives may be effective in achieving conflict prevention and peace building in many possible ways besides ending violence. If ending violence was the only criteria by which one were to judge effectiveness in conflict reduction, few if any of the existing efforts that address conflict would be deemed successful—i.e., most would be failures. In this light, the questions “What is effective?” or “What works?” are simplistic, for they imply that a project is to be judged on a single criterion and the only task is to ascertain whether that criterion was met or not. Because conflicts are multi-causal and multi-dimensional and are played out on more than one plane, however, effectiveness in addressing conflict can be realized in more than one way. An initiative might be influencing several aspects of the conflict besides its level of violence. Hence, a given initiative is not likely to be found to be simply successful or unsuccessful. The more appropriate way to put the effectiveness question is as follows: “What are the apparent strengths and limits, and harmful effects, of a given initiative (and under which conditions do they typically occur)?

As seen below, the possible impacts of initiatives are organized under broad categories which represent the various major possible sources of conflicts (or brakes on them), i.e., the several major underlying or obvious facets, or fronts, in which conflicts may be carried on and are manifested. These represent alternative foci or leverage points that initiatives may address and, therefore, upon which they may have some impact.<sup>6</sup>

#### **A.4. Impact Criteria for Determining Effectiveness in Conflict Prevention, Management and Peace Building** (based on factors that drive violent conflicts or preserve peace)

The project case-study investigators were asked to obtain evidence to answer this basic question: To what extent and how is an initiative affecting these conflict risk factors or peace capacities?

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<sup>5</sup> The impacts that were researched included not only those explicitly identified by the intervention’s objectives, but also unanticipated positive impacts, as well as unintended negative impacts. Programs found “effective” in terms of certain intended objectives would not in fact be effective if they also “did harm” because of other, non-negligible adverse consequences.

<sup>6</sup> The significance of these criteria for conflict and peace is discussed further in Appendix B, which provides greater detail and some indicators of the impacts observed. Not all the questions applied to every type of intervention or every case of a type.

### Structural Conditions (Predisposing Factors)

- ❑ **General economic assets:** Is the initiative improving the quantity and distribution of economic assets, such as physical or financial capital or income generating activities, or specific capacities for obtaining such assets?
  - **Inter-communal relations:** Is it fostering more positive perceptions/attitudes and more peaceful everyday interactions and relationships between rank and file members of the main parties to a conflict? Between large numbers of people from the differing identity groups (tribes, clans, ethnic groups) who constitute the mobilized constituencies in the conflicts of these countries?

### Channels (Intermediary political processes and institutions)

- ❑ Social and political mobilization: Is the initiative increasing the ability of groups to organize collectively in order to pursue interests peacefully?
- ❑ Social innovation and organizational learning: Did it introduce promising new methods for peace building and spread these techniques elsewhere?
- ❑ Public formal governing institutions and processes (the state): Is the initiative creating or strengthening political processes and governing institutions (local or national) that can incorporate conflicting parties, interests and issues in regular, ongoing processes and procedures for peaceful conflict resolution?
- ❑ Top-level official political negotiations: Is the initiative advancing the resolution of specific grievances, issues and disputes among the leaders of conflicting parties engaged in the bargaining process?

### Triggers and Inhibitors (immediate actions and events)

- ❑ Violent and other hostile behavior: Is the initiative encouraging conciliatory statements or policy actions and deterring or reducing provocative rhetoric and specific acts of violence?

### Data Collection and Field Research

MSI's investigators each went to the field to examine one or two case studies of one of the three types of initiatives (i.e., local peace processes, middle-level dialogues, and peace radio). Over periods of between one and two weeks, they sought answers to a set of questions about the initiatives' possible impacts and the factors that might be contributing to whatever impacts were identified (See Appendix B). Depending on feasibility and appropriateness, data were collected through reviewing written materials, interviewing knowledgeable informants, convening a focus group, distributing a questionnaire, and/or doing direct observation.

## Analysis

The study was to learn not simply whether the initiatives have been effective or not, and in what respects, but also why they were or were not effective. This required looking for various factors associated with an initiative's evident results, and thus might be the most important determinants of the impacts that were found. These associated elements could then be translated into practical lessons or guidelines for applying the initiative.

Actually, the project was asked to determine three kinds of effective practices or lessons:

- ❑ How can a particular case of a generic type of initiative be improved? This concerns effective practices within the process of implementing a specific initiative.
- ❑ How can the initiative be improved as a generic mode of addressing conflicts? This concerns effective practices within the process of implementing a given type of initiative.
- ❑ Which of the three generic types of initiatives works best? This concerns effective practices when choosing among several types of initiatives.

The second source of information for our effective practices and lessons learned is a USAID-sponsored workshop on the Impacts of Peace Building Initiatives in the Greater Horn of Africa in January 2001. In this workshop, representatives from NGOs throughout the region reacted to presentations of some of the case studies mentioned above, reported on additional initiatives, and offered advice for those who might try a new initiative in the future.

## Results of the Analysis

The full synthesis report contains the following:

Part I: Brief summary of the seven case studies conducted.

Part II: Presents evidence about the impacts of each of the *three generic types of initiatives* of interest, as found in the data collected about specific cases of each initiative. It also identifies the factors that make for the effectiveness of each type.

Part III: Compares the effectiveness of the three types with each other, and considers whether the same factors should be kept in mind when applying them or when different guidelines are necessary.

Part IV: Presents overall observations and policy recommendations regarding issues that may affect all the initiatives.

We present summaries of the findings from each chapter (Parts II-IV) in the remainder of this Executive Summary in the sections that follow.

## **B. General Lessons and Effective Practices for Initiatives Aimed at Preventing or Managing Conflict and Building Peace**

The following lessons and practices are derived from all of the case studies undertaken as a whole, and represent generalizations that may be useful to the practitioner.

- ❑ In many, if not most cases, the nature and location of the conflict predetermines whether the conflict prevention practice initiated will be useful. Knowing at what level the change needs to occur for conflict to be prevented is key. Trying lots of interesting things so that it looks like something is going on to prevent conflict may raise expectations, waste resources and most of all, distract energy from initiatives that might work better.
- ❑ Local peace initiatives using local authorities and traditional leaders will work best when the nature of the problem is locally caused. Lack of incentives for parties to talk to each other is difficult to overcome. Traditional processes for managing local conflicts may exclude some stakeholders to dominate (e.g., elders). Adapting traditional conflict management mechanisms so that they enlist people from different segments of the community (elders, women, youth, civil servants, educators) to work with existing institutions in new ways can lead to achieving more durable conflict management outcomes.
- ❑ Religious leaders and religious organizations offer a number of assets for conflict prevention and peace building. In some circumstances, religious organizations can be perceived as neutral bodies, drawing on moral and religious power to facilitate intervention activities or discussions down to the level of communities and parishes when other options are not apparent. They can combine forces across faiths to initiate effective multi-faith efforts such as mediation forums, engage with government leadership in high-level dialogues and mobilize local peace efforts through community-based civic education. Neutrality can be difficult to maintain, however; once religious organizations engage in a peace building dialogue, for example, their role may shift from facilitation to advocating a position.
- ❑ Local peace initiatives exist in a “no man’s land” between governments and people. Local expectations are higher sometimes than a leader’s authority to deliver. These initiatives can open channels but they may not be sufficient to deliver peace. If local peacemakers become too popular, they can be perceived as a threat to the authorities that must ultimately implement the decisions reached.
- ❑ Peace conferences and meetings depend on long-term preparation to be considered legitimate. They cannot be driven by the timetables of outside conveners. When they work, it is because people are ready to talk and consider it in their own self-interest to do so. Preparing the groundwork for this kind of discussion can take a long time.

- ❑ Porous borders with greatly differing legal systems among neighboring states mean that local initiatives at peace using traditional community authority may work and that the spread effect throughout the region may be greater than between states with rigid borders. This can be particularly applicable to clan related conflict.
- ❑ Competition for scarce resources is at the heart of many of the regional conflicts studied. If this competition for land, water, grazing space etc cannot be addressed in the long term, conflict prevention may be only medium term at best.
- ❑ Outside actors are often key unseen players in local conflict prevention. They can either act on or destroy what local groups do to promote peace. Many locally based solutions depend on national level action to implement long term. This may mean resources, new legislation, amnesty or demilitarization. Insurgent groups have no reason to listen to local demands for peace when the stakes they seek are secondary to local needs. If they do not need local citizens for food, supplies or cover, they may be much less likely to honor requests to negotiate by local leaders. The place they really want to be heard may be many miles away.
- ❑ Transparency in selection of actors for dialogues at all levels is essential. Groups must see themselves represented and selected fairly to buy in to the process. People are more likely to participate if they do not feel a threat by doing so. The objectives of the dialogue should be clear to all participants for it to be effective. Even when they are not speaking for any group but just engaging in community problem-solving across ethnic or clan lines, the objectives must be known by all.
- ❑ Radio must be as independent as possible to be both credible and viable over time. Dependence on government owned infrastructure for transmission may hurt credibility of the programming.
- ❑ Adherence to strong ethical standards of reporting by journalists is essential to credibility. Using joint reporting teams to cover controversial stories in conditions of ethnic or clan bias is critical to program integrity.
- ❑ Two-way communication on radio or television on issues has proven very effective in promoting dialogue and for venting popular frustration. These formats can include call-in or town meeting shows. The entertainment value of programs that feature mixed groups working to solve problems can be a powerful message in societies with major cleavages.

## **C. General Lessons for Local Community-Based Peace Processes, Middle-Level, Non-Official National Dialogues, and Peace Radio Initiatives**

The lessons that the investigators derived about effective practices within the process of implementing particular projects are provided in the separate case studies attached in Appendix C. Part III presents the evidence about the effectiveness of each of the three generic types of initiatives of interest, based on generalizations derived from the specific cases of each initiative that was studied. Though the initiatives are still relatively young, some useful lessons were identified.

## C1. Local Peace Processes

### **Local Community-Based Peace Processes: General Lessons Learned about Planning and Implementation**

- Economic sources of conflict that are often hundreds of years old are exacerbated in scarcity situations where natural resource depletion or population pressure make scarce resources even more valuable. Peace processes can do little to change competition for scarce grazing land, youth lack of employment, or recurrent drought.
- Local dialogue is most effective when the origin of the problem is based on local history or competition for resources. When the actors are largely outside the region and fueling the conflict for other reasons, local discourse can only serve as an example to national leaders that they should be acting to resolve the conflict. It will not by itself be sufficient to bring peace permanently.
- The ability of well-organized local initiatives to influence armed military groups of insurgents was limited in the cases studied. There was no incentive on the part of the outside groups to listen to local peacemakers. The best these initiatives can do is to lobby central government to negotiate with the insurgents.
- Working through existing groups with respected leaders in the community helps move the process along more quickly than initiating ad hoc groups with less community support. Multi-faith approaches can be effective in regions where there is sufficient religious differentiation to make this desirable.
- Groups that work pro-actively to involve large numbers of local stakeholders have met with success in local dispute resolution. Groups that practice proactive transparency in their work and make sure that the constituent members are representative of significant portions of the communities affected met with success. This argues for a largely locally led initiative that will have its own timetable and may not work at the pace that outside supporters in central government or internationally might prefer.
- “One-off” conferences, while still capable of providing major breakthroughs, are seldom sufficient to ensure a long-term peace process. They are often dependent on the authority of the conveners who may not be from the region or the countries and may not have local support for the next steps required. It is possible that the peace process can be continued if there is a follow-up plan of actions in which local and other stakeholders have ownership.
- In cases where the conflicts are largely local, where the instigators of the violence are known and where elders are given authority to act, de-escalating the dispute from clan to individual level may be effective. Even if reprisals have occurred, elders can intervene and try the initial triggering act (usually a murder or major theft) under local legal authority and then settle the reprisals with compensation and formal apologies.

## C2. Middle-Level Non-Official National Dialogue

### **Middle-Level Non-Official National Dialogue: General Lessons Learned about Planning and Implementation**

- Middle level dialogue can be compromised by lack of linkages to non-elite groups and to key political actors beyond its group. Who represents whom in the dialogue can be tricky if criteria for selection are not transparent and the groups represented do not do their own selecting. Outsiders know best approaches are not well received and may hurt credibility for the efforts over time.
- Dialogue cannot really occur if some of the power holders are not present to receive and/or use the results of the middle level discussions. The idea of these discussions as an alternative track to formal initiatives only works if there is a group or set of decision-makers willing and ready to listen to the middle level outcomes. They can become contentious if representation is not transparent.
- Regular contact over time is needed for this kind of dialogue to work. One-time only events are probably of a more limited impact.
- Lack of immediate physical threat to participants can help foster middle level dialogue participation.
- To have real impact at the middle level, there should be a critical mass of participants who are distributed around the country, not just in the capital. All major groups in the country should be consciously represented and easily identifiable in the discussion groups. Transparency on this point is critical to legitimacy of the process beyond the group.
- Middle level dialogue benefits from the presence of stakeholders as represented by legitimate groups who can be asked to send representatives to the process.
- Participants in the dialogue should perceive their participation as part of a larger set of objectives that include peace building in the region or country.
- These dialogues can be seen as more effective if there is a perception that they are needed to influence actions beyond the group involved.

### C3. Peace Radio Initiatives

#### Peace Radio: General Lessons Learned about Planning and Implementation

- Use community radio stations and independent transmissions and receivers as a way to avoid political or legal limitations.
- Be wary of the government's ability to control peace radio through its control of the necessary infrastructure.
- To the extent possible, keep the peace radio initiative as reliant on indigenous resources (and as least reliant on outside donor resources) as possible, so as to increase credibility, local acceptance, and the likelihood of sustainability over the long term.
- Where government is a key player in the conflict situation (either as a party to the conflict or as a mediating force), be careful to maintain a balance between peace radio's independence and objectivity and its potential for engaging the government in positive, peace building activities and opening of the political system.
- Avoid commercialization of the conflict—take care to ensure that the purpose of peace radio is not compromised or derailed by replacing substantive content with purely entertainment programming.
- At the same time, where possible, use relaxed forms of programming to get the message across; e.g., use “soap opera”-type dramas and situational comedy shows to entertain and inform at the same time.
- Conduct needs assessments among listener groups to determine content and formats that are most likely to be effective.
- Ensure that personnel—program developers, producers, reporters, actors, et al.—have the technical expertise to produce quality programs and package information effectively.
- Ensure that the content of peace radio programs is appropriate to the culture, language, and religion of the target population of listeners; produce the peace radio programs in the local language or dialect, to the maximum extent possible.
- Ensure ethnic diversity in programming and news reporting, so as to ensure that you reach all the audiences you are trying to reach, especially all opposing sides in the conflict situation.
- In news reporting, use journalists from the region or country, not outsiders, as outsiders may not know what is new or different in what they are reporting.
- Plan a regular schedule of radio programming, so that listeners know what to expect and when to tune in for favorite programs.
- Use peace radio for two-way communication through, for example, talk-show formats.
- Use peace radio to educate listeners about appropriate roles for leaders and other citizens to play during times of conflict, about citizens' rights and responsibilities, about government's responsibilities, and so on.
- Use peace radio to highlight gender roles and dynamics in the peace building process.
- Use peace radio to inform listeners about the plight of other conflict-ridden communities, including the adverse effects that arise from conflicts that are not prevented and managed effectively.
- Use peace radio to publicize development activities, especially in rural areas, so as to enhance resource mobilization and attract additional development projects and donor attention.
- Use peace radio to disseminate early warning information, information on the status of cease-fires, and other timely information that can serve to prevent additional violent conflict.
- Use peace radio to publicize and provide live coverage of positive activities in peace building, such as conflict resolution meetings, statements of opinion leaders, etc.
- Encourage journalists to establish ethical standards for balanced reporting and maintain them.

## **D. Comparison of the Effectiveness of Local Community-Based Peace Processes, Middle-Level, Non-Official National Dialogues, and Peace Radio Initiatives in Conflict Prevention and Management**

Part IV compares the effectiveness of the three types with each other and considers which factors should be kept in mind when applying any of them. It identifies effective practices in making choices from among the differing types of initiatives. Local peace processes had the most impact on more dimensions of conflict than either dialogues or peace radio. Mid-level dialogue was less effective than local peace processes in most respects. Peace radio was found to be the weakest of the three in most areas.

Why local peace processes were comparatively more effective than the other two approaches appears to arise from:

- ❑ The scale of the conflict addressed (e.g., cattle raids compared to combat between organized armies),
- ❑ The extent of cooperation possible between the project and the governing authorities operating at the same level,
- ❑ Whether the activity involved could exercise coercive police authority over the parties to the conflict,
- ❑ Whether the activity was directed at achieving some legally binding agreement on specific disputes or involved discussion of broader issues or general relationships of the parties in conflict, and
- ❑ Whether the activity had autonomy in relation to influential outsiders because it was either ignored, tolerated or supported.

In sum, local peace processes were relatively more effective than mid-level dialogue and peace radio because there was a closer match between the scale of the problem and the inherent capacity of the initiative involved in influencing it. In effect, more of the major functions of a state were within the control of the local actors, including policymaking, security, justice, and the economy. The two national instruments, on the other hand, were faced with larger conflicts and had much less control over the parties responsible and the means to alter their behavior. They represented only a few of the actors and forces affecting the conflict at the national and regional levels. By the same token, however, the local traditional process could not be effective in the national arena.

Although local peace processes may be able to affect more aspects of conflict than the other two, all three instruments tend to be the most effective with respect to the same dimensions of conflict. That is, while individual cases may shift the overall average performance of local peace processes above that of the other two instruments, they are

strongest in the same areas as the others are, and their weak areas tend to be the same as well. In particular, all these civil society approaches are similar to each other in that they all mainly mobilize agents for peace and introduce social innovation. They are less consistently influential in altering economic activity, governmental institutions and the level of violence. Apparently, civil society approaches are mainly good at strengthening various communication and organizational channels that operate outside governmental and the prevailing economic and political processes. Only under certain unusual conditions, do they appear to be able to make significant inroads into the sources of conflicts that arise from economies, social structures, governmental practice, political processes, and violence itself.

## **E. Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **E.1. General Ingredients of Success**

Most of the factors that were associated with more effective practice of each of the three instruments were specific to that approach, such as the elaborate consultative process that is used by traditional local peace settlements to reach consensus. However, a few factors can be found in some form in relation to at least two and sometimes three of the instruments. Distilling these common elements provides us with the most important factors to respect in order to achieve effective results, no matter which type of initiative is being applied.

Characteristics that were found to be associated with effective approaches more than once are as follows:

- ❑ Conflict Factors
  - The main stakeholders actually or potentially involved with the conflict are either already incorporated within the conflict prevention activity, or they believe that their interests are affected by it, and therefore take the activity seriously. At a minimum, they feel that their concerns are represented or reflected in the activity. In other words, the parties take some active interest in the activity because it has the potential or actual power to benefit or harm their perceived interests;
  - The conflict that is addressed has not become violent and militarized.
- ❑ Design Factors
  - The planning and implementation of the activity followed a clearly formulated strategy and adhered to high professional standards of balance and fairness.
  - The activity was perceived to have validity and legitimacy because of some kind of indigenous origin and character (local or national).

- ❑ Implementation Factors
  - The activity sought out and obtained support from other organized interests in the affected conflict arena.

Some of these factors, once stated, may seem obvious, and thus do not require research. But others are either not necessarily understood as important to keep in mind, or though obvious, may often be forgotten.

## **E.2. Implications for Further Research**

The study provides suggestions regarding the kind of further research needed on effectiveness in conflict prevention. Research is needed that is able to probe more deeply into the magnitudes of particular kinds of impacts, the possible subsequent chains of causation that may or may not result, and the interactions of impacts on each other. This may suggest two kinds of research design:

- ❑ One research design that looks more in depth at individual representative cases, and several differing kinds of initiatives within such a setting, rather than examining only one type of initiative in several diverse cases. Such evidence would help greatly to verify the conclusions reached by these case studies, which have to be considered as preliminary hypotheses.
- ❑ One research design that looks at several different kinds of initiatives within a particular setting, but using a comparative approach across selected countries in different regions. This design would necessarily limit the depth of the examination in each country, yet nonetheless would yield valuable insights on the efficacy of distinct approaches, and how they do or do not work together, in diverse settings.

## **E.3. Possible Implications for USAID and NGO Decision-Making**

Note that several of the general factors that are associated with effective results do not have to do directly with the more or less controllable aspects of an initiative, such as the design of the activity or its implementation, but rather with the less directly controllable factors such as the historical, socio-economic or political-military context and the nature of the conflict. This suggests that to the extent conflict impacts are to be expected, more attention should be paid to the settings in which initiatives are introduced and thus whether given approaches, and sets of them, are likely to be viable and efficacious in the settings in which they are introduced. To achieve this, certain procedures are advised in making choices.

At the individual project level: When considering inaugurating a particular type of project, a prior appraisal should be done to ascertain whether the setting is conducive to the particular kind of instrument that is being considered, and that it embodies the

features that have been identified as important for effectiveness (as brought out in the checklists in Part III).

At the level of the conflict arena (local or national): Rather than asking whether a given project or type of initiative should be adopted in general, the primary question that should be addressed is what the scope and nature of a given conflict in a given setting is, and what are the various kinds of responses that the decision maker's organization and others might make that are appropriate to that situation.